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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to clarify the nature of the situations which do or do not lead to discriminatory behavior towards women. An attempt was made to compare women, under identical stimulus conditions, with a group known to receive discriminatory treatment, e.g., hippies. Sex and social deviance was factorially combined in two experimental conditions requiring cooperation. The study demonstrated that whether a "minority group" effect is produced with sex as a variable depends upon the nature of the experimental task. When "femaleness" and "social deviance" were factorially combined and the same experimental manipulations utilized, social deviants were uniformly discriminated against while females were favored in one case and treated negatively in the other. It is hypothesized that females will be treated as members of a minority group when they aspire to equal power or status with men. (Author/LAA)

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Women as a "functional" minority group.

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Women as a "functional" minority group.

Beginning with Helen Hacker's well-known article in 1951, there have been a number of attempts to extend the definition of minority group to women. Obviously, such a definition cannot be defended statistically since women comprise more than 50% of the population. Therefore, attempts have centered about the role characteristics of members of minority groups, in particular, the fact of discrimination and the awareness of such discrimination (Hacker, 1951). Women, because of their high social visibility and ascribed social and intellectual inferiority, have sometimes been compared to blacks in our society by Women's Lib "Activists."

Despite these characterizations of women as a minority group, little empirical data have been gathered on behavior toward women vis-a-vis other minority groups. It is particularly important that such data be obtained for the various groups in identical social situations and without the knowledge of the individuals under study. It is also necessary that the situations chosen can be demonstrated to produce discriminatory behavior toward members of already clearly defined socially deviant groups; e.g., blacks and/or hippies. The recent experimental literature on cooperation appears to offer such situations.

A number of studies have attempted to determine the relationship of membership in a socially deviant group to cooperation. In a variety of non-demand situations requiring help, blacks receive significantly less assistance than do whites (Bryan & Test, 1967; Piliavin, Rodin & Piliavin, 1969; Gaertner & Bickman, 1971). Deviant dress also produces significantly less cooperation than conventional attire when the individuals from whom cooperation is requested are members of the general population. (Raymond & Unger,

1972; Keasey & Tomlinson-Keasey, 1971; Darley & Cooper, 1972; Samuel, 1972).

It is difficult to predict the relationship of sex and cooperation in non-demand studies. On one hand, there is much data to indicate that perception of dependency greatly increases cooperative behavior (Berkowitz, 1970; Schopler & Bateson, 1965). Under laboratory conditions, females who asked for help received more help than females who did not request such aid and more help than dependent males (Gruder & Cook, 1971). There was no relationship due to the sex of the potential helper. On the other hand, there are data which indicate that in some situations requiring cooperation, e.g., petition signing (Keasey & Tomlinson-Keasey, 1971) and being in a stalled car (Deaux, 1971) females received less cooperation than males. Behavior towards females in these situations was comparable to that received by deviantly dressed or low status individuals under similar conditions. Such data would seem to provide empirical evidence that women are, at least sometimes, members of a minority group.

The present study attempts to clarify the nature of the situations which do or do not lead to discriminatory behavior toward women. An attempt was made to compare women, under identical stimulus conditions, with a group known to receive discriminatory treatment, e.g., hippies. Sex and social deviance were factorially combined in two experimental conditions requiring cooperation. In the first condition, subjects were requested to grant a small favor, i.e., permit the experimenter to go before them on a checkout line. In the second, the experimenter's car apparently stalled at an intersection (Doob & Gross, 1968) and cooperation was measured in terms of the length of the interval before the subject reacted by honking his or her horn.

It is hypothesized that individuals dressed in deviant attire, regard-

less of sex, would receive less cooperation in both experimental situations. Sex, however, should produce a differential effect in the two experimental situations. When a favor is requested, female dependency becomes salient and females should receive more cooperation than males. When no help is required other than resistance of frustration, females like other minority groups, should receive less cooperation than males. No interaction between sex and social deviancy is expected in either situation.

Experiment I

Method

Experimenters. The Es were one male and one female undergraduate psychology majors at Hofstra, aged 21 and 20 respectively, both white. Each E served in both the conventional and deviant role.

Conventional attire for the male E consisted of a business suit, white shirt and tie and neatly combed hair. For the female E it consisted of a suit and neat grooming. Deviant appearance for the male E included brightly colored paisley pants, ribbed body shirt, sandals, an army jacket and a peace medallion around his neck. He was unshaven and wore a wig of long and uncombed hair. Deviant appearance for the female E included brightly colored tie-dye pants, a flowered shirt, fringed vest, sandals, round metal rim glasses and a peace medallion about her neck. Her hair was long and relatively ungroomed.

Subjects. Ss were approached on check-out lines in a number of super-markets and department stores. Ss were chosen without regard to race, sex or age. Only 1 S on a line was studied at any one time. A total of 371 individuals were approached: 214 males and 157 females.

Location. The study was conducted in four stores in Nassau County.

Long Island, New York. The stores that were chosen served shoppers of both middle and lower-middle socioeconomic levels.

Procedure. The different experimental conditions were counterbalanced so that each store was sampled once under each condition. The same departments in each store were visited under each condition. Data collection took place on two days with one intervening day.

The E approached S who was the third or fourth person standing on a fairly long check-out line and who had more than one item to purchase. E carried one item, purportedly to be purchased and asked politely "Excuse me, I'm in a terrible hurry and I was wondering if I could get ahead of you." If the S cooperated, E left the line before reaching the register, remarking that he or she was in too much of a hurry to wait or that he or she had forgotten something. Once E was away from S, the Ss' sex and estimated age (below 30, 30-45, above 45) were recorded as well as whether or not he or she had cooperated.

Results

A 2 X 2 X 2 X 3 chi square (sex of S X age of S X sex of E X attire of E) was used to analyze the data (Winer, 1962). Age was included as a blocking variable. Although there appear to be some interesting results involving age, a discussion of them is beyond the scope of the paper. The main effects of E's Sex, χ^2 (1) = 11.24, $p < .01$; Attire, χ^2 (1) = 10.27, $p < .01$; and S's Sex, χ^2 (1) = 4.49, $p < .05$ were significant. The female E received more cooperation than the male E (81.9% vs. 66.7%); conventionally dressed Es received more cooperation than deviantly dressed Es (81% vs. 66.5%); and male Ss cooperated more than female Ss (78.5% vs. 68.8%).

The interaction of E's Sex X S's Sex, χ^2 (1) = 9.77, $p < .01$, indicated

that female Ss cooperated equally with male and female Es (70% and 68% cooperation, respectively), however, male Ss cooperated more with female Es than male Es (92% and 64% cooperation, respectively).

Finally, the interaction of E's Sex X Attire X S's Sex, χ^2 (1) = 6.47, $p < .05$ indicated that although deviant attire always resulted in less cooperation than conventional attire, the male Ss tolerated deviant dress in the female E much more than the male E, while the reverse was true of female Ss - they were much less tolerant of deviant dress in the female E than in the male E (See Table 1).

Experiment II

Method

Experimenters. The Es were the same as in Experiment I. However, in this experiment conditions resembling those of the Doob and Gross study (1968) were introduced. In the conventional conditions Ss drove a middle status automobile with no insignia of any kind on it. In the deviant conditions Ss drove a similar type of automobile festooned with stickers, peace signs and pasted on flowers.

Subjects. Subjects consisted of 408 drivers divided equally into each of the 24 experimental conditions: sex and condition of deviancy of E, sex and age of S who happened to pull up behind one of the experimental cars.

Location. The study was conducted on a number of major thoroughfares in central Nassau County, Long Island, New York. The streets were selected according to the following criteria: 1) there were many drivers, 2) they served neighbors of both middle and lower-middle socio-economic level, 3) there were drivers of both sexes.

Procedure. The procedure used was similar to that employed by Doob and Gross (1968). E drove his or her car until a red light was reached. When the light changed, E did not start immediately, but appeared to be busy changing the radio station or gazing from side to side. These behaviors were engaged in until either the driver in the car behind honked his horn or 15 seconds had elapsed. An observer hidden in the back seat of the car recorded the latency of the first honk as well as the sex and estimated age of the subject.

Results

A 2 X 2 X 2 X 3 analysis of variance (Sex of E X Condition of Deviancy X Sex of S X Age of S) was used in order to analyze the data. As in Exp. I, age was included as a blocking variable and is not discussed in the paper.

Since almost every driver honked before 15 seconds had elapsed, data could not be analyzed in terms of the percentage of drivers honking for the various experimental conditions. Therefore, the latency before the first honk was calculated and used as the dependent measure.

All of the main effects were highly significant. Female Es were honked at faster than Male Es, 7.4 vs 9.2 seconds, $F(1,384) = 83.36$, $p < .01$. The Conventional Es were afforded more time before being requested to move on via the horn honk than the Deviant Es, 9.1 vs 7.6 seconds, $F(1,384) = 64.86$, $p < .01$. Female Ss were more patient than Male Ss, 9.2 vs 7.5 seconds, $F(1,384) = 70.71$, $p < .01$.

As in Exp. I, Sex of S and Sex of E interacted significantly, $F(1,384) = 17.85$, $p < .01$, although the direction of the effect was different. Although both Male and Female Ss honked faster at the Female E than the Male E, the

difference was greater for the Male Ss. Male Ss increased their response speed from 8.9 to 6.1 seconds when the E was Female rather than Male while the Female Ss changed their speed of honking from 9.6 to 8.7 seconds.

The interaction Sex of S X Condition of Deviancy was also significant, $F(1,334) = 10.02$, $p < .01$. Male Ss honked faster at Deviant vs Conventional drivers, 7.0 vs 7.9 seconds, however, Female Ss differentiated between the drivers even more. They honked after 8.1 seconds when the driver was Deviant as compared to 10.3 seconds when the driver was Conventional.

The interaction of Sex of E X Condition of Deviance, $F(1,384) = 9.23$, $p < .01$, indicated that although Condition of Deviance in general resulted in faster honking, the difference was greater when the E was Male. For the Male E, deviant attire changed honking from 10.3 to 8.2 seconds while for the Female E, honking changed from 7.9 to 7.0 seconds.

Finally, the interaction of Sex of E X Condition of Deviancy X Sex of S, $F(1,384) = 7.73$, $p < .01$ (See Table II) indicated that when the experimenters changed from the conventional to the deviant condition both male and female Ss decreased their latency of response. Only in the combination of the female E and male S is this decrease absent. Since this condition receives extremely rapid honking, it is possible that we are limited by reaction time and there is no room for further decline.

Discussion

The study demonstrated that whether or not a "minority group" effect is produced with sex as a variable depends upon the nature of the experimental task. When "femaleness" and "social deviance" were factorially combined and the same experimental manipulations utilized, social deviants were uniformly discriminated against while females were favored in one case and treated

negatively in the other.

The results of the present experiment are similar to those already reported in the literature for the two variables considered separately. Deaux (1971), in a similar horn-honking study, also found that female drivers were treated less patiently than were male drivers in the same situation. She attributes her results to the presumed lower status of the female driver. Both Deaux (1971) and Doob and Gross (1968) have shown that low status cars are honked at much more rapidly than high status cars.

A number of other studies utilizing a variety of tasks requiring cooperation have demonstrated that those dressed in a deviant manner receive less cooperation than those conventionally attired (Raymond & Unger, 1972; Keasey & Tomlinson-Keasey, 1971; Darley & Cooper, 1972; Samuel, 1972). Raymond and Unger (1972) also found that females were more affected by social deviancy than males — the other studies do not provide data on the relationship between the sex of the experimenter and the sex of the subjects. In the present experiment it is not surprising that deviant individuals receive less cooperation under all conditions than do conventional individuals. The question that must be answered is: If women are a minority group, why is there a reversal of the relationship that sex has to other people's cooperation when we change the nature of the task?

While a number of studies have shown no relationship of sex to cooperation, those that do indicate that females are more likely to be helped than males (Berkowitz, Klanderman & Harris, 1964; Gruder & Cook, 1971). The latter authors state that the sex difference in helping behavior is due to the sex of the recipient and apparently depends upon the perception of dependency of the individual from whom help is requested. By extension, one

could assume that females are perceived as being more dependent than males, particularly when they request aid. The results of Experiment I are consistent with those of a field replication of Gruder and Cook's (1971) study—females requested help and received more cooperation than dependent males.

The authors feel that a more extensive differentiation between the situation in Experiment I and Experiment II is required in order to understand these results. It is believed that perception of dependency is a limited aspect of a more general phenomenon related to the power relationship between the cooperator and the cooperatee.

In the first experiment the female's behavior fit the stereotype of the "poor damsel in distress." In this situation the female, especially if conventionally dressed, has indicated that she has no power, but that rather all power is in the hands of the other individual. In the second experiment, however, the female possesses some degree of social power by virtue of her ability to frustrate another individual. Although the car may have stalled, it is not obvious she is in a dependency relationship with the driver behind her. In fact, she has placed herself in at least a position of equality with that driver.

The differential effect of social deviance and sex on the two tasks provides interesting information about this hypothesized power relationship. Social deviance uniformly produces discrimination in both situations. Moreover, it reduces cooperation toward women in all experimental conditions. It is possible that choice of deviant clothing and personal style reflects a challenge to social power which lacks any real power to back it up. Studies have shown that the probability of an aggressive response occurring following frustration is related to the status attributed to the frustrator (Cohen,

1955; Hokanson & Burgess, 1962). Doob and Gross (1968) attribute their results to the ability of the frustrating individual to exercise sanctions. The higher the status, the more power, the more power, the more cooperation elicited. Conversely, females and dviants may receive less cooperation because they have lower status and power.

Males may be perceived of as being more legitimate sources of power and authority than females. Both men and women are more ready to sign a petition when it is presented by a male than by a female (Keasy & Tomlinson-Keasey, 1971). Women who engage in behavior similar to that of men are not apt to acquire similar social status from it. Pheterson, Kiesler and Goldberg (1971) have shown that women's work will be evaluated less well than men's even by other women in situations where social influence is ambiguous. Only when the female work is given supposed social sanction (winning of a contest) is it evaluated as being equal to that of men.

Another major factor which may effect those results is interpersonal attraction toward members of the opposite sex. This factor seems to operate most clearly in the face-to-face situation of experiment I. As has been shown in a number of previous field experiments, women, in general, cooperate less than men (Raymond & Unger, 1972; Gaertner & Bickman, 1971; Wispe & Freshley, 1971). However, in the present experiment there is also a sex of subject X sex of experimenter interaction. Males cooperate with females more than with other males, while females do not differentially respond to the sex of the individual requesting the favor. These results may be due to the social expectation that males, but not females, are permitted to show attraction to the opposite sex.

The effects of inter-personal attraction apparently interact with the effects of deviant attire. While deviance decreases cooperation for all individuals under all conditions, individuals are least tolerant of deviant individuals of their own sex. Women are least cooperative with female deviants and men are least cooperative with male deviants. This effect for women holds up even under the non-face-to-face conditions of experiment II.

It is hypothesized that females will be treated as members of a minority group when they aspire to equal power or status with men. They will receive decreased cooperation from both men and women under these circumstances. Membership in other minority groups (e.g., social deviants) will further decrease cooperation even in tasks in which they are favored as dependent individuals. Females apparently react against disturbance of the social order more than males. Thus, they, as well as males, may oppose the gaining of power by females.

Of course, there are a number of other factors operating in these experiments. The age of the subject and the similarity between the subject and experimenter are apparently of importance. It is also an open question as to why so many more effects were obtained than in most experiments. It is possible the answer lies in the nature of the field experiment. Subjects were not aware of what was required of them and in these naturalistic settingsfreer rein was given to the working out of power relationships than would otherwise be the case in the laboratory situation.

Table I

Percentage of Ss' cooperation as a function of E's Sex, E's Attire and S's Sex.

		Experimenters			
		Male Attire		Female Attire	
		Deviant	Conventional	Deviant	Conventional
Subjects	Male	53	75	88	95
	Female	64	73	58	80

Table II.

Mean Latency of First Horn Honk in Seconds as a Function of E's Sex, E's Condition of Deviancy and S's Sex.

		Experimenters			
		Male Attire		Female Attire	
		Deviant	Conventional	Deviant	Conventional
Subject	Male	7.77	9.95	6.31	5.90
	Female	8.54	10.65	7.41	9.83

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